DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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TO : DEPARTMENT OF STATE

EXCISE JUL 24 1 46 PM 1967

FROM : Amembassy SAIGON

DATE: July 19, 1967

SUBJECT : The Election Campaign and the CVT

EXCISE

b-1 ed

REF :

Enclosed is a Memorandum of Conversation with [redacted] an advisor to [redacted] and candidate for the Senate in the September elections.

[redacted] normally a fairly taciturn individual from whom it is frequently difficult to elicit information. During the dinner at which the reported conversation took place, he was suprisingly full of enthusiasm, clearly looked forward to going on the stump, and generally gave every indication of being fully in support of the CVT's move into politics. The ticket of which he is a part and which apparently will receive CVT endorsement is headed by two retired generals, Tran Van Don and Ton That Dinh. However, as noted in the memorandum, [redacted] insists that the ticket will represent the interests of "little guy," as its name, "Farmer-Worker-Soldier," implies.

BUNKER

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY Ivan Izenberg DATE 10/7/81
PORTIONS DENIED AS INDICATED

Enclosure:

Memorandum of Conversation, July 14, 1967

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FORM 4-62 DS-323

ted by: LAB:RCSearing:ger	Contents and Classification Approved by: POL:JACalhoun
LAB:RASensen	POL:TMRecknagel

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CLASSIFICATION

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

DATE: July 14, 1967

SUBJECT: The Election Campaign and the CVT

PARTICIPANTS: [redacted] Advisor to [redacted] Senatorial Candidate and
Robert A. Senser, Labor Attache
Richard C. Searing, Assistant Labor Attache

[redacted] is running for the Senate at the direct request of [redacted] on the Farmer-Worker-Soldier ticket. He says this ticket is composed of three northerners, three southerners, three from Central Viet Nam, and one Montangard. It also has Catholics, Buddhists, Hoa Hao, Cao Dai, and Confuscianists, and, as its name implies, also represents, farmers, workers, and soldiers. He was quick to point out however that it represents the lower military echelons, even though two retired generals head the list.

[redacted] says both his ticket and the [redacted] ticket will concentrate their campaigning on social and economic issues as befit their repective slates. He says neither ticket has yet devised a specific campaign platform. CVT will attempt to elect both its own slate and the one on which [redacted] has a place. [redacted] is worried about the repercussions on his [redacted] career if the CVT slate should lose while his is winning as the CVT people would then say [redacted] had not pulled his weight for the CVT while CVT was working hard for [redacted] ticket. On the other hand, if CVT wins and [redacted] ticket loses, he would lose face with [redacted] CVT members as not having enough political pull to win election.

[redacted] says the CVT has some advantages over other slates because they have an established organization throughout the provinces. He said the Tenant Farmers will be particularly useful in the purely rural areas, the Provincial Councils will be especially effective in the provincial chief towns. He also pointed out that the CVT Insurance Agency has agents throughout Viet Nam who talk to the "little people" all the time. He said the agency has over 60 agents Saigon alone.

In [redacted] view, elections outside the urban areas will turn on the i of a few personalities because many villagers cannot even read. Th ask the "head of the family" who to vote for, or they turn to a CVT or other leaders in the villages for advice. He also said that dur recent village and hamlet elections, many local CVT officials were e

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office. (He avoided estimating how many these were.) They too will have an influence on the forthcoming campaign.

[ ] responsibility for campaigning has been divided among various CVT officials. He has been assigned along with one other to responsibility for Regions I and II. Others are assigned to the remaining corps areas and a special group will work in the Saigon-Gia Dinh area.

If there are no "surprises" he thinks the Thieu-Ky ticket will probably be elected. He did not rule out a "surprise," however, but was unwilling to speculate on what it might be.

With respect to the candidacy of General "Big" Minh, [ ] agreed with position previously taken by [ ] that he should be allowed to campaign as decision to refuse would be a psycho-propaganda fault. He said however that in a free, honest election, Minh would get 50% of the vote.

After dinner, [ ] reminisced briefly about his experiences in North Viet Nam. He said he had a high position with the Viet Minh up to 1946-7, but left that organization when it became obvious to him that it was controlled by the Communists. [ ] claims to have been a wealthy man when he was in the north, owning a large factory employing over 300 workers, and owned a great deal of property as well. He had to leave all this behind when he left. In the Viet Minh organization he was in charge of [ ]
He is 64 years old.

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